

# TRUANCY PREVENTION PROGRAM

## STATE'S ATTORNEY'S OFFICE



June 2016

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

### TPP Spring Semester Comes to a Successful End

Students enrolled in the fall 2015: 106  
 Students enrolled in the spring 2016: 153  
 Students that graduated from the TPP SY2015-2016: 129  
 Volunteers that served in SY2015-2016: 42

The State's Attorney's Office, in partnership with Montgomery County Public Schools, the Montgomery County Police Department, and Community volunteers successfully completed a 10-week program in the fall of 2015 and another in the spring of 2016, graduating a total of 129 students. These students had an average of 60% reduction of their truancy which is the minimum requirement to graduate from the program.



### Countywide Graduation for TPP Students held June 1



The Truancy Prevention Program graduated a total of 129 students this SY2015-2016.

Truancy Prevention Program graduation ceremonies took place in 15 middle schools in Montgomery County between April and May 2016, and a bigger celebration was held on June 1, 2016 at the Montgomery County Circuit Courthouse in Rockville, MD. This event was a countywide graduation ceremony for all students who graduated from the Truancy Prevention Program in the 2015-2016 school year. The Honorable John McCarthy, State's Attorney, represented by Deputy State's Attorney Laura Chase, and the Honorable Karla N. Smith, Circuit Court Judge co-hosted the event in celebration of the success of the graduates, and in recognition of the dedication of the volunteers. Parents and guardians were also invited, as an acknowledgement of their own contribution to the success of their children's future. During this event the students and volunteers were awarded certificates, and refreshments served immediately following the ceremony.

Laura Chase reminded the students that the only way to reach success is "to try," and that in fact, the very first step to success is the decision to try. Judge Karla Smith said, "this is just the beginning for you." She pointed out to the TPP graduates that they were in the room that day because they committed to take school seriously. Judge Smith reemphasized what Laura Chase said about trying, by saying that the difference between the person who fails and the one who succeeds is that the person who succeeds keeps trying. "Keep that inner person saying, I can do it," she added.

### THINK ABOUT IT

We have the power to create a hope-filled life....when we join together with our neighbors, we are the architects of the future where we want to live.

We strive to be citizens — people with the vision and the power to create our own way, a culture of community capacity, connection, and care.

The gifts of the people in our neighborhood are boundless. Our movement calls forth those gifts.

—An Abundant Community, John McKnight & Peter Block



Judge Karla Smith

Laura Chase  
Deputy State's Attorney

George Simms  
Community Outreach  
Unit Director

Rexanah Wyse

Councilmember Sydney Katz  
& PPW Sally Katz

Volunteers Erika  
AJ & Jack

Ofc.  
Percell  
Gregory

Truancy Prevention Program Graduation Ceremony, June 2, 2016. Other attendees not in picture gallery: SAO TPP Staff, Phil Andrews, Lynda Earle, Amy Bills, Yasmine Eleazar, & Parkland Middle School Principal Khanny Yang,

Joseph Hooks

Ms. Starr McCoy-Snead, F.S.Key M.S.  
Resource Counselor

Aniyah Wiseman  
Student Speaker

SRO mentors Officers Shate Jackson, Kristie Palmer, Diane Henderson-Neal & Ofc. Wayne Wiltshire

# THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS FOR BEING A PART OF THE SOLUTION



Truancy Prevention Program  
Volunteers Appreciation Reception  
La Tasca, Rockville, MD  
May 18, 2016

## A Noteworthy Story:

A seventh grade student began her very first session in the Truancy Prevention Program in tears. She was not thrilled about participating in the Program because she believed she was in trouble for her truancy. She was intimidated by the team; from the uniformed school resource officers to the adults at the table. Although each adult tried to alleviate her reservations, the student appeared to be quite sad about participating in the program. She opted to be a part of the newly established tutoring program as well. She began with a D in her math class. Over time, through her consistent attendance in both the truancy panel sessions and the tutoring program, she began to trust the team and develop positive rapport with the tutors. The team continuously provided her with encouragement and rewarded her for her efforts. Soon enough she was attending weekly sessions with a beaming smile on her face. By the end of the Truancy Prevention Program she pulled up her math grade to an A.

***This student has successfully graduated from the TPP. She is an example of what time, patience, encouragement, and individualized attention can do for a student to unlock their potential.***

— Contributed by *Rexanah Wyse*



## TPP Fall 2016

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### What to expect?

2 new schools this Fall Semester,  
bringing our total Montgomery  
County Public School partners to 17, and  
1 new school for after school tutoring.

*We asked our students what they learned from the Truancy Prevention Program. Here's what they said:*

### I learned .....

- that school is important
- that I can improve my grades just by coming to school
- that school can be fun if you participate more
- that it is better to work hard so you can get what you want in life
- to be balanced, consistent, and motivated
- to keep my grades up and help others keep their grades up so we can all succeed through life
- to care more about myself by caring about my education, to focus on the positive rather than the negative, and not just to settle but to push myself forward
- that it is very important to come to school everyday and on time because everyday that you wake up, you are setting your future
- that there are so many people that want to help, you just have to look
- that coming to school everyday is important even if your grades are good
- that in working hard, you earn things
- that school is very important for your future and it can really change your life
- to come to school everyday and do all my work, and to keep having my grades up so I can be someone in the future
- to really work hard and do my best
- to become more responsible
- that I can do anything I put my mind to
- that arriving to school on time is crucial to my future
- that if you don't attend school your parents can go to court
- to be more independent when it comes to waking up and coming to school
- to always be responsible, and to talk to adults for any help I need

Even if you don't think so.....

**You certainly have made a difference in the lives of the students you served.**



*"Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy.....  
you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in."  
— author unknown*

**THANK YOU FOR FULFILLING YOUR 10-WEEK COMMITMENT!**  
*Kindly let us know if you plan to serve with us in the fall.*

### More Noteworthy Story:

A 7th grader is facing the adversity and uncertainty of homelessness. At first meeting, when the student was asked how he wakes up in the morning, he replied, "when the windows are down," referring to the car window which his parents rolled down each morning when it was time to get up. His life is very different from most who wake up on comfortable beds, but he is always positive. His father who was facing legal issues was fortunately supportive of the Program and of his son's after school activity to improve his academics. This student evidently improved while in the Program and reached achievement status for the June graduation. Although he is rarely up to date with his clothes and hair cut, and is not exactly in a solid place as of yet to attain high academic levels, he was not discouraged, and still came to the TPP sessions weekly, willing and enthusiastic. He was always happy to be coached on goal-setting and on strategies that he could use to unlock his potentials. He also always accepted the support offered to him by the TPP Team to improve his academics, and was always determined to get to the bottom of his truancy. With the support of the TPP Team, he worked hard to make it to school everyday. His humility, patience, and determination brought him to the successful completion of the TPP Program.

— Contributed by Joseph Hooks

### The TPP Team appreciates your feedback:

*We all play a role in the outcome of the next generation's future.*

It was enjoyable working with the kids.

*I enjoyed the kids' cheerfulness and typical honesty. The TPP Staff is really efficient, super dedicated and a memorable group of good human beings.*

It was fun and I enjoyed meeting like-minded volunteers.

*Helping others and giving back to the community and making a small difference in someone's life is an enjoyable experience.*

I gained confidence and communication skills through this experience. The most enjoyable part was seeing the students' reactions when their grades improved.

*I gained a better understanding of the troubles and rough lives that many children are exposed to. But, more parent involvement is necessary and more structure in the volunteering regiment to make tools and/or work that the kids are behind on more accessible.*

I gained a greater awareness of the various challenges truant kids face.

*We need to let the parents know in advance that this is to help their child. Where I volunteer, we had zero parents show up to orientation, and zero parents to the graduation ceremony. The parents are the important persons the kids look up to and without their encouragement, these students won't take this seriously.*

I gained an increased ability to work within someone else's system.

*I always enjoy teaching math!*

How wonderful it is that nobody need wait  
a single moment before starting to  
improve the world.

~Anne Frank



**"The seeds of kindness that you  
plant today, will one day bloom in the hearts of all that you touch."**

**Please stay in touch and spread the word: The Truancy Prevention Program needs mentors, site coordinators and tutors for the 2016 fall program. Email or call Yasmine Eleazar for questions, feedback, suggestions: Tel. (240) 777-7501; Email: [yasmine.eleazar@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:yasmine.eleazar@montgomerycountymd.gov)**